

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1           1. A hosting service providing platform comprising;  
2           an automated computer cluster, said automated computer cluster including a  
3           control center; and  
4           a plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes, whereby said control center  
5           coordinates the functions of said plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes.
- 1           2. The platform as defined in Claim 1, wherein said plurality of hardware-  
2           independent cluster nodes further comprises a specialized distributed file system.
- 1           3. The platform as defined in Claim 2, wherein said specialized distributed file  
2           system is integrated and optimized for said automated computer cluster.
- 1           4. The platform as defined in Claim 2, wherein said specialized distributed file  
2           system further comprises data for a plurality of virtual environments.

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1 <sup>sub</sup> 5. The platform as defined in Claim 4, wherein each of said plurality of virtual  
2 environments further comprises:  
3 software providing emulation of a full service computer with its own operating  
4 system;  
5 a unique administrative root user for each member of said plurality of virtual  
6 environments;  
7 a file system template and file tree; and  
8 operating system parameter configuration;  
9 and further wherein each of said plurality of virtual environments does not include  
10 dedicated physical memory or any other hardware resources.

1 6. The platform as defined in Claim 4, wherein said specialized distributed file  
2 system further comprises:  
3 means for making file transactions from any file system changes made in at least  
4 one of said plurality of virtual environments;  
5 means for distributing said transactions to achieve the appropriate level of data  
6 accessibility; and  
7 means for permitting access to data from each member of said plurality of cluster  
8 nodes.

1           7. A method for providing a hosting service providing platform comprising the  
2 steps of:  
3           automating a computer cluster, further including  
4           establishing a control center; and  
5           operating a plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes, whereby said control  
6 center coordinates the functions of said plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes.

1           8. The method as defined in Claim 7, wherein the step of operating said plurality  
2 of hardware-independent cluster nodes further includes the step of implementing a  
3 specialized distributed file system, further wherein said specialized distributed file system  
4 is integrated and optimized for each member of said plurality of hardware-independent  
5 cluster nodes.

1           9. The method of Claim 8, wherein the step of operating a plurality of hardware-  
2 independent cluster nodes further includes the step of operating a plurality of virtual  
3 environments.

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10. The method of Claim 9, wherein the step of operating said plurality of virtual environments further includes the steps of:

- installing software which emulates a full-service computer with its own operating system;
- establishing a unique administrative root user for each member of said plurality of virtual environments;
- establishing a file system template and file tree for each member of said plurality of virtual environments;
- implementing the operating system parameter configuration for each member of said plurality of virtual environments;

and further wherein said step of operating said plurality of virtual environments does not include the step of dedicating physical memory or any other hardware resources.

11. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the step of operating said plurality of virtual environments further includes the steps of:

- making file transactions from any changes to said file system made in at least one of said plurality of virtual environments;
- distributing said file transactions to achieve the appropriate level of data accessibility; and
- permitting access to data from each member of said plurality of cluster nodes.

1           12. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the step of operating each  
2 member of said plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes further includes the steps  
3 of:  
4           installing a base operating system and network connection;  
5           providing access to the distributed file system containing the file system template  
6 for each virtual environment within said cluster node;  
7           accessing the resources of said cluster node; and  
8           utilizing said cluster node for launching new virtual environments.

1           13. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the step of permitting access to  
2 data from each of the plurality of virtual environments at said plurality of hardware-  
3 independent cluster nodes further includes the step of:  
4           restarting each virtual environment in a failed cluster node at another cluster node  
5 having appropriate resources available.

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1           14. A method for utilizing a hosting service providing platform in an operating  
2 system comprising the steps of:  
3           requesting a service in said operating system;  
4           operating a virtual environment; and  
5           utilizing a specialized distributed file system.

1           15. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of operating said virtual  
2 environment further includes the step of:  
3           installing any application of said operating system.

1           16. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of operating said virtual  
2 environment further includes the step of:  
3           configuring any application of said operating system.

1           17. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of operating said virtual  
2 environment further includes the step of:  
3           launching any application of said operating system from said virtual environment.

1           18. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of operating said virtual  
2 environment further includes the step of:  
3           repairing remotely any failed software configuration of said virtual environment.

- 1           19. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of utilizing a specialized  
2 distributed file system further includes the step of:  
3           achieving a corresponding fault tolerance level.

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